

Violent Video Games

Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. – Matthew 22:36-40

These two principle commandments are what our new life in Christ is to fulfill. Jesus did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill. We can see how that takes place. Everything we do and don't do should find a connection somehow back to these two commands that Jesus identifies. At best, our actions should fulfill these two commands and at worse, they should not violate them. This article addresses only one general subject, entertainment and then one specific subject within entertainment, violent video games. (This includes games that depict military combat.)

From the Outline of Biblical Usage the word **heart** in this verse denotes:

- I. the centre and seat of spiritual life
 1. the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavours
 2. of the understanding, the faculty and seat of the intelligence
 3. of the will and character
 4. of the soul so far as it is affected and stirred in a bad way or good, or of the soul as the seat of sensibilities, affections, emotions, desires, appetites, passions

The Greek word for **mind** in this verse has three *Strong's* definitions: mind, understanding and imagination.

There is not a way to obey these two commands and participate in playing violent video games, our thoughts, emotions, passions, imagination, etc. become corrupted away from having the "mind of Christ." Certainly there was war in the Old Testament, but I present that:

To God:

War is not a game

Killing is not recreation

Bloodshed is not for entertainment

The idea or position that, these activities (entertainment through violent video games) are permissible because it's part of being a man or "maleness" is a false narrative because no parents or pastors intend on letting young men actually join the military. "Pretending" to be something that you will never be doesn't make you more of a man. If these games are ok, why isn't actually joining in real military battle ok? We need to be looking inside and asking ourselves, "why the fascination with killing?" and, "why am I not gauging my manliness in comparison to The Man, Jesus Christ?" He is the ultimate picture of what a man is supposed to be.

One of the reasons we have had a long standing position against Hollywood productions is because of the violence. Shall we now say watching war movies is acceptable. This principle needs to be applied across all forms of entertainment.

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Lord gives us instructions about our thoughts throughout scripture. One of the places we find specifics is in the writing of the apostle Paul.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. – Philippians 4:7, 8

Let us follow the biblical mandate to give God all our heart and mind.